

Message Text

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ACTION OS-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 CU-04 AID-07 L-03 A-01 ABF-01

H-01 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-12 INR-10 CIAE-00 NSAE-00

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R 051617Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5877

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FOR A/OS, ARA/CEN, ARA/MGT

E.O. 17652: NA/A

TAGS: ASCH, PFOR

SUBJ: LINCOLN SCHOOL

REFERENCES: 1) STATE 249997; 2) SAN JOSE 4429

SUMMARY. DEVELOPMENTS AT LINCOLN SCHOOL ARE ENCOURAGING,(
AND CONTINUED U.S. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL.
END SUMMARY.

1. NEA BOARD AT LINCOLN SCHOOL, WHICH CONSIDERS ITSELF
INTERIM BODY ONLY PENDING REGULAR ELECTIONS SOMETIME BEFORE
MARCH, IS WORKING WELL IN TRYING TO SORT OUT AND RE-
SOLVE FINANCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND PERSONNEL PROB-
LEMS IN WAKE OF PRECIPITOUS DEVELOPMENTS REPORTED REFTEL 2.
OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE, NEW BOARD WAS ABLE TO RESOLVE
IMMEDIATE FINANCIAL CRISIS BY SECURING BOTH BANK LOAN
(151,000 COLONES) AND SOCIAL SECURITY INSTITUTE MORTGAGE
LOAN (395,000 COLONES). MATRICULATION PAYMENTS FOR NEW
YEAR ARE NOW COMING IN AT BETTER PACE. BOARD HAS DECIDED
TO GO AHEAD WITH VACATION SCHOOL BEGINNING NEXT WEEK, AND
THIS DECISION SHOULD FURTHER HELP RESTORE CONFIDENCE THAT
SCHOOL WILL CONTINUE AS EFFECTIVE INSTITUTION DESPITE REAL
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PROBLEMS.

2. WHILE SITUATION FAR FROM RESOLVED, HIGH TENSIONS AND EMOTIONS ON BOTH SIDES OF EARLIER DISPUTE APPEAR TO HAVE QUIETED AND THERE SEEMS TO BE A GROWING CONSENSUS--INCLUDING SOME BUT NOT ALL FORMER BOARD MEMBERS--TO STICK WITH LINCOLN SCHOOL AND WORK FOR IMPROVEMENTS ON MORE GRADUAL BASIS. ON OTHER HAND, MORE THAN 15 NEW APPLICATIONS ARE PENDING AT COSTA RICA ACADEMY, MOST OF WHICH CERTAINLY REPRESENT POTENTIAL TRANSFERS FROM LINCOLN, AND AN INDETERMINATE NUMBER OF LINCOLN STUDENTS WILL ALSO NO DOUBT GO ELSEWHERE. MOREOVER, A FEW HARD-LINE SUPPORTERS OF OLD BOARD ARE STILL TALKING ABOUT CREATING A NEW SCHOOL. EMBASSY'S PRESENT ASSESSMENT, HOWEVER, IS THAT COMBINATION OF TOUGH OBSTACLES FACING ANY NEW SCHOOL PLUS REAL AND WIDESPREAD SENTIMENT IN COMMUNITY FOR LINCOLN SCHOOL MAKE SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO LAUNCH A NEW SCHOOL UNLIKELY AT THIS TIME.

3. JOHN EVERS EXPECTED TO RETURN TO SAN JOSE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK. BOARD WILL PRESS HIM FOR PROMPT DECISION AS TO WHETHER HE WILLING CONTINUE AS LINCOLN SCHOOL DIRECTOR. BOARD'S POSITION IS THAT IT WANTS HIM TO STAY, BUT MOST KNOW WHERE IT STANDS. EMBASSY PLANS TO TALK TO EVERS SHORTLY AFTER HIS RETURN AND ENCOURAGE HIM TO GIVE SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION TO STAYING. IF HE CANNOT, WE HOPE THAT AT LEAST HE WILL BE WILLING TO REMAIN DURING NEXT CRITICAL MONTH OR TWO WHILE SCHOOL IS TRYING TO GET ON ITS FEET FOR NEXT REGULAR TERM.

4. EMBASSY IS INCREASINGLY IMPRESSED BY DEPTH AND BREADTH OF AFFECTION AND SUPPORT FOR LINCOLN SCHOOL IN SAN JOSE. SCHOOL CLEARLY HAS BECOME OVER THE YEARS A WELL-ROOTED INSTITUTION THAT COSTA RICANS--INCLUDING POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LEADERS--AS WELL AS MOST AMERICANS WANT TO MAINTAIN. DEMISE OF SCHOOL WOULD BE SERIOUS SHOCK BOTH EDUCATIONALLY AND POLITICALLY WHICH EMBASSY IS TRYING DISCREETLY TO HELP AVOID. IN THIS CONNECTION, FAILURE TO CONTINUE U.S. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR ASSUMING--AS WE NOW CONSIDER LIKELY--THAT A REASONABLE ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT IMPAIRED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IS OFFERED, WOULD BE VIEWED AS U.S. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GOVERNMENT PULLING THE RUG AT CRITICAL JUNCTURE IN PIQUE OVER RECENT TROUBLES AT LINCOLN AND COULD HAVE VERY DAMAGING EFFECT ON OUR OVERALL RELATIONS HERE. EMBASSY THEREFORE URGES THAT A/OS CONTINUE TO PLAN FOR MAINTENANCE OF ASSISTANCE NEXT YEAR AT LEAST AT LEVELS OF RECENT YEARS.

5. EMBASSY WILL PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION ON LINCOLN'S STATUS AND PLANS ASSOON AS AVAILABLE.

VAKY

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